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10 February 2021

DEIS Public Comment for Uinta Basin Railway Project

TO: Joshua Wayland, PhD
Surface Transportation Board
c/o ICF
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031

Subject: Uinta Basin Railway Draft Environmental Impact Statement

RE: Docket No. FD 36284
RDCC Project No. 76724

FROM: Duchesne City Council
ADDRESS: PO Box 974, Duchesne UT 84021

Dear Mr. Wayland,

Our Duchesne City Council would like to thank you for taking our comments into consideration.

We would like to offer our support for the Seven County Coalition application for the Uinta Basin Railway Project as it will bring a balance to our local economy. We have expressly noted concerns regarding how the project may adversely affect some landowners and would like our comments to reflect similar concerns as the Surface Transportation Board (STB) analysis notes in Chapter 1 of the DEIS (page 1-3), Section 10901(c) which directs the Board to grant construction proposals unless the Board finds the proposal "inconsistent with the public convenience and necessity (PC&N). This permissive licensing standard presumes that rail construction projects are in the public interest unless shown otherwise."

We understand the infrastructure offers a transportation alternative which mitigates the impacts associated with traffic on Hwy 191 and we believe that truck traffic over Hwy 191 – Indian Canyon may in fact increase over the coming years as oil production increases. However, we urge the STB to consider that while the Uinta Basin Railway may alleviate much of the anticipated traffic, your analysis indicates the project would displace 1 residence and five structures and require right-of-way through several ranch properties. While the STB believes all the ranching and farming operations would remain viable, we expect the landowners impacted by the project to be treated with the greatest regard and that every option will be explored and expended to avoid the use of the power of eminent domain including, if need be, a personal visit by a principal of Rio Grande Pacific to each land owner. We further expect Rio Grande Pacific to make every effort to achieve and meet the "cost to cure" for any objection by such land owners who will be petitioned for a right-of-way.

With these considerations in mind and because we anticipate the benefit of job creation and economic growth, we offer our support for the project. Thank you for the opportunity to offer our comments.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Rodney Rowley", is written over a horizontal line.

Rodney Rowley,
Duchesne City Mayor

Duchesne City Council Members:

Jason Baker
Dawnette Browning
Bryce Hamilton
Jeannie Mecham
Danny Peatross